

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TOKYO 03806 01 OF 03 150353Z

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FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7679

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RANGOON

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

USLO PEKING

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 TOKYO 3806

EXDIS

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E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, ENRG, ECON, VN, JA, XM

SUBJECT: ARITA MISSION TO HANOI

SUMMARY: MULTI-MINISTRY GOJ DELEGATION TO HANOI, LED BY DEP
FON MIN ARITA, FOUND VIETNAM FAR LESS DEVELOPED THAN EXPECTED
AND AS A RESULT ABANDONED PLANS TO CONCLUDE BASIC TREATIES
OF COMMERCE, AVIATION, AND TRADE. FOCUS WILL TURN INSTEAD
TO OIL EXPLORATION OFF THE VIETNAMESE COAST, IMPLEMENTATION
OF GRANT AID ASSISTANCE AND HELP FOR VIETNAMESE AGRICULTURAL
PRODUCTION. GOJ TEAM WILL VISIT HANOI SOON TO PURSUE OIL
EXPLORATION ARRANGEMENTS.

NORTH VIETNAMESE SHOWED SENSITIVITY TO REPORTS OF
DIFFERENCES BETWEEN HANOI AND PEKING. ALSO DURING TALKS, HANOI'S
PRIMARY INTERLOCUTOR VICE FONMIN HOANG VAN TIEN DENIED ANY
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PAGE 02 TOKYO 03806 01 OF 03 150353Z

DESIGN FOR AN INDOCHINESE CONFEDERATION AND EXPLICITLY STATED

THAT VIETNAM, LAOS AND CAMBODIA WOULD MAINTAIN THEIR SEPARATE IDENTITIES AND SOVEREIGNTY. TIEN WAS HIGHLY CRITICAL OF THAILAND AND INSISTED BANGKOK MUST RID ITSELF OF FOREIGN BASES AND MILITARY PERSONNEL, INCLUDING ADVISORS, BEFORE RELATIONS COULD BE NORMALIZED. HE CRITICIZED MANILA LESS HARSHLY BUT SAID MANILA HAD DISTORTED AND THEREBY NULLIFIED EARLIER AGREEMENTS. NHAN DAN DENUNCIATIONS OF INDONESIA NOTWITHSTANDING, TIEN CALLED RELATIONS WITH JAKARTA, KUALA LUMPUR AND SINGAPORE GOOD. ASEAN, HE CASTIGATED AS "A MALICIOUS, TREACHEROUS, AND OPPRESSIVE" CONTRIVANCE WHICH VIETNAM WOULD NEVER JOIN. TIEN POINTED TO BURMA AS A MODEL FOR OTHER SE ASIANS' COMPORTMENT. END SUMMARY.

1. WHILE PURPOSE OF VISIT TO HANOI BY MULTI-MINISTRY JAPANESE DELEGATION WAS TO MUTUALLY EDUCATE BOTH SIDES ON ALL MAJOR POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF THE TWO NATIONS' SOCIETIES AND SYSTEMS, GOJ ALSO HOPED AND EXPECTED TO LAY GROUNDWORK FOR CONCLUSION OF SEVERAL BILATERAL TREATIES TO ENABLE RAPID EXPANSION OF EXCHANGE BETWEEN JAPAN AND THE DRV. WHEN WEEK-LONG VISIT LED BY DEP FONMIN ARITA ENDED MARCH 2, JAPANESE HAD DRASTICALLY REVISED THEIR ESTIMATE OF DRV CAPABILITY TO ESTABLISH SUCH A RELATIONSHIP AND ABANDON PLANS TO CONCLUDE BASIC TREATIES ANYTIME SOON ON CIVIL AVIATION, NAVIGATION, AND TRADE. FONOFF FIRST SE ASIA DEPDIR TSUKADA, WHO ACCOMPANIED ARITA AND ATTENDED ALL MEETINGS, TOLD US ARITA MISSION DECIDED THAT NORTH VIETNAM'S ECONOMY AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE ARE SO UNDEVELOPED THAT IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO PROCEED AS JAPAN PLANNED.

2. IN TALKS LED BY DRV VICE FONMIN HOANG VAN TIEN, ARITA MISSION CONCLUDED THAT BILATERAL RELATIONS COULD PROCEED IN THREE AREAS: A) IMPLEMENTATION OF ROUGHLY 13.5 BILLION YEN GRANT ASSISTANCE TO DRV AGREED TO IN COURSE OF NEGOTIATION OF ESTABLISHMENT OF EMBASSIES. B) SUPPORT FOR STILL PRIVATE AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM BETWEEN VECO AND JAICO. AT A LATER STAGE, AFTER THIS COOPERATIVE VENTURE IS FURTHER DEVELOPED, GOJ COULD ASSIST WITH FINANCIAL SUPPORT. C) INTENSIFY NEGOTIATIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT OF OFF-SHORE OIL OFF BOTH NORTH AND SOUTH VIETNAM. HANOI
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 TOKYO 03806 01 OF 03 150353Z

IS KEENLY INTERESTED IN OBTAINING JAPANESE EXPERTISE AND ASSISTANCE. GOJ AND SUCH JAPANESE COMPANIES AS TAIYO AND KOYO SHARE THIS ENTHUSIASM. A SMALL GOVERNMENTAL TEAM LED BY FIRST SE ASIA DIVDIR ITO PLANS TO PROCEED TO HANOI FOR NEGOTIATIONS AS SOON AS HANOI IS PREPARED. ITO EXPECTS TO DEPART IN NEXT FEW DAYS AFTER HANOI HAS STUDIED AGENDA AND PROPOSALS MADE BY TOKYO.

3. DURING TALKS WITH LE KHAC, DEPUTY MINISTER OF ECONOMIC PLANNING MINISTRY, JAPANESE WERE TOLD THAT IN THREE YEARS SINCE '73 CEASEFIRE AGREEMENT NVN'S ECONOMY HAS RECOVERED AND AGAIN REACHED STAGE OBTAINED PRIOR TO BEGINNING OF VIETNAM WAR. DURING CURRENT FIVE YEAR PLAN (1976-80), LE KHAC SAID VN WOULD CONCENTRATE ON FOUR AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT: AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES, FORESTRY, LIGHT INDUSTRY. LIMITED RESOURCES WOULD BE DEVOTED TO HEAVIER INDUSTRY RELATED TO AND NECESSARY FOR LIGHT INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT. (REGARDING PLANS FOR SVN'S ECONOMY, LE KHAC CITED SAME POINTS AS PRG FONMIN MADAME NGUYEN THI BINH PUBLICIZED RECENTLY IN HANOI. SVN ECONOMY WOULD INCLUDE SEVERAL CATEGORIES: PUBLIC ENTERPRISES, COLLECTIVE ENTERPRISES, JOINT PUBLIC-CAPITALIST ENTERPRISES, SMALL SCALE PRIVATE ENTERPRISES AND AGRICULTURE - KHAC DID NOT MENTION COLLECTIVIZATION OF AGRICULTURE IN THE SOUTH.

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PAGE 01 TOKYO 03806 02 OF 03 150414Z

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AMEMBASSY RANGOON
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
USLO PEKING

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 3 TOKYO 3806

NOTE: ALTHOUGH MADAME BINHS' POINTS DO NOT RULE OUT MASSIVE COLLECTIVIZATION OF FARMS, BOTH SHE AND LE KHAC SEEM TO BE SAYING THAT THE CURRENT MIXED ECONOMIC

SYSTEM WILL BE LARGELY RETAINED FOR TIME BEING.

4. ARITA SOUGHT HANOI'S ASSISTANCE IN INVESTIGATING WELFARE OF MISSING JAPANESE AND IN FACILITATING DEPARTURE OF REMAINING JAPANESE AND THEIR FAMILIES FROM SVN. DEP FONMIN TIEN, WHO INFORMED ARITA THAT HE WAS EMPOWERED TO ACT ON BEHALF OF PRG SVN, AGREED TO TRY TO HELP. ARITA ALSO SOUGHT HANOI'S ASSISTANCE IN DETERMINING WELFARE OF JAPANESE JOURNALISTS MISSING CAMBODIA. AT FIRST, TIEN REFUSED. AFTER ARITA PERSISTED AND EXPLAINED THAT HE ONLY SOUGHT HANOI'S ASSISTANCE IN TRANSMITTING THE MESSAGE TO PHNOM PENH, TIEN AGREED.

5. JAPANESE BROACHED SIX TIMES SUBJECT OF RELATIONS WITH SVN AND OPENING OF JAPANESE CONSULATE GENERAL IN SAIGON FOLLOWING REUNIFICATION. TIEN RESPONDED EVASIVELY
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 TOKYO 03806 02 OF 03 150414Z

(BUT POINTEDLY) THAT SVN HAS SUFFERED DEVASTATING DAMAGE DURING THE WAR AGAINST THE AMERICAN IMPERIALISTS. CERTAIN OTHER (UNSPECIFIED) GOVERNMENTS MUST ALSO SHARE RESPONSIBILITY FOR "HEALING THE SENTIMENTS" OF SOUTH VIETNAMESE WHICH RESULTED FROM THIS DEVASTATION. ONLY IN THIS WAY WOULD THOSE COUNTRIES BE ABLE TO HAVE RELATIONS WITH THE PRG. ASKED ABOUT POSSIBILITY OF ESTABLISHMENT OF A CONSULATE GENERAL IN SAIGON AFTER REUNIFICATION, TIEN CONTENTED THAT HE COULD NOT POSSIBLY MAKE COMMITMENTS FOR THE POST-REUNIFICATION GOVERNMENT. IN THIS CONNECTION, TIEN INDICATED THAT REUNIFICATION WOULD TAKE PLACE WITHIN TWO MONTHS OF THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS APRIL 25. (DURING LARGELY CEREMONIAL CALL BY ENTIRE DELEGATION ON FONMIN NYUGEN DUY TRINH, FONMIN SUGGESTED THAT REUNIFICATION MIGHT BE LATER THAN EXPECTED. TSUKADA SURMISED THAT TRINH MEANT IN SEPTEMBER.)

6. ARITA ALSO BROUGHT UP QUESTION OF ROUGHLY EIGHTEEN BILLION YEN DEBT TO JAPAN MADE BY FORMER GVN AND INSISTED THAT THE PRG SVN OR THE REUNIFIED GOVERNMENT SHOULD ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE DEBT. TIEN RESPONDED PEREMPTORILY THAT THOSE FUNDS HAD BEEN "USED UP" BY THE FORMER GVN. TIEN CITED THE HOSPITAL IN SAIGON AND THE ELECTRIC POWER GENERATING COMPLEX IN THE MEKONG DELTA AS EXAMPLES OF HOW THE FUNDS HAD BEEN "USED UP." TSUKADA SAID THE FONOFF IS DISCUSSING WHETHER, BECAUSE OF HANOI'S OBDURATE ATTITUDE, THERE IS ANY REASON TO MAINTAIN THE THREE MAN STAFF IN SAIGON. REMAINING THREE MAY SIMPLY BE "EVACUATED."

7. INTERNATIONAL ISSUES. ARITA AND TIEN ALSO HELD A SEPARATE DISCUSSION OF INTERNATIONAL ISSUES WITH ONLY A

FEW PARTICIPANTS. THESE TALKS FOCUSED ON HANOI'S
RELATIONS WITH MOSCOW AND PEKING, INDOCHINA AND ASEAN.

8. HANOI'S RELATIONS WITH SOVIET UNION AND CHINA.
ARITA ASKED ABOUT HANOI'S RELATIONS WITH MOSCOW AND PEKING.
RECALLING THE LONG WAR AGAINST THE US, TIEN SAID THAT
THE VIETNAMESE PEOPLE COULD NEVER FORGET THE TREMENDOUS
ASSISTANCE ESSENTIAL TO WINNING THE WAR WHICH WAS
PROVIDED BY THE SOVIET UNION AND CHINA. SINGLING OUT
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PAGE 03 TOKYO 03806 02 OF 03 150414Z

CHINESE HELP, TIEN SAID HUGE AMOUNTS OF MATERIAL HAD
BEEN TRANSPORTED ACROSS CHINA, PHYSICALLY HANDLED BY THE
CHINESE, AND VN COULD NEVER FORGET THIS ASSISTANCE.
NOTING REPORTS THAT RELATIONS BETWEEN HANOI AND PEKING
WERE STRAINED, TIEN CALLED THE REPORTS MALICIOUS
RUMORS SPREAD BY FOREIGN ENEMIES OF VIETNAM. TSUKADA
REMARKED TO US THAT IT WAS CLEAR HANOI HAS BECOME VERY
SENSITIVE TO EVIDENCE OF DISPUTE BETWEEN THE DRV AND PRC.

9. RELATIONS WITH INDOCHINESE NATIONS. TIEN SAID VN,
LAOS AND CAMBODIA HAD STRUGGLED TOGETHER AGAINST AMERICAN
IMPERIALISM AND VIETNAM WOULD MAINTAIN VERY CLOSE RELATIONS
WITH THE OTHER INDOCHINESE STATES. THE THREE NATIONS
WOULD WORK FOR MUTUAL BENEFIT, AND WOULD RESPECT EACH
OTHERS SOVEREIGNTY AND INDEPENDENCE, EACH COUNTRY WOULD
MAINTAIN ITS SPECIAL NATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS. ARITA
ASKED IF VN WAS STILL INTERESTED IN AN INDOCHINESE
CONFEDERATION. TIEN RESPONDED UNEQUIVOCALLY, "NO."
TSUKADA SAID THAT TIEN DISCUSSED LAOS AND CAMBODIA IN
EXACTLY THE SAME TERMS BUT ALWAYS MENTIONED LAOS FIRST.

10. ASEAN. TIEN DISCUSSED HIS ASEAN NEIGHBORS FIRST
INDIVIDUALLY. VIETNAM WANTED TO HAVE NORMAL DIPLOMATIC
RELATIONS WITH THAILAND BUT, HE SAID, THAILAND POSES AS
A FRIEND WHILE POINTING A DAGGER INTO THE BACK OF ITS
SO-CALLED FRIEND (DRV). HANOI COULD NOT HAVE RELATIONS
WITH A COUNTRY WITH FOREIGN BASES, MILITARY PERSONNEL,
OR MILITARY ADVISORS ON ITS SOIL. TURNING TO THE
PHILIPPINES, TIEN SAID THAT VIETNAM WANTS TO HAVE GOOD
RELATIONS WITH THE PHILIPPINES. MANILA'S ENVOY HAD VISITED
HANOI, NEGOTIATED NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS BETWEEN THE
TWO COUNTRIES, AND LAID THE BASIS FOR GOOD FUTURE RELATIONS.
BUT AS SOON AS HE RETURNED HOME HIS ACCOMPLISHMENT WAS
FUNDAMENTALLY CHANGED ABROGATED AND DISTORTED BY THE GOP.
HANOI CONSIDERS THE AGREEMENT COMPLETELY NULLIFIED.
TIEN DID NOT MENTION FOREIGN BASES OR PERSONNEL IN DISCUSSING
THE PHILIPPINES. REGARDING OTHER THREE ASEAN STATES,
TIEN MERELY SAID THAT THE DRV HAS GOOD RELATIONS WITH INDONESIA,
MALAYSIA, AND SINGAPORE. TSUKADA SAID HIS MISSION WAS

ASTOUNDED WITH THIS TATEMENT SINCE THEY WERE AWARE THAT
HANOI'S NHAN DAN HAD JUST SEVERELY CRITICIZED INDONESIA
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PAGE 04 TOKYO 03806 02 OF 03 150414Z

FOR ITS LEADING ROLE IN ASEANM TSUKADA ASSUMES THAT HANOI
SOMEHOW MAKES A DISTINCTION BETWEEN BILATERAL TIES WITH
INDONESIA AND JAKARTA'S ROLE IN ASEAN.

11. TIEN THEN VIGOROUSLY ATTACKED THE ASEAN ORGANIZATION
AS A "MALICIOUS, TREACHEROUS, OPPRESSIVE" CONTRIVANCE
TO SUBVERT THE INDEPENDENCE OF SE ASIAN PEOPLE. STRESSING
THE EXTREME SENSITIVITY OF THIS POINT, TSUKADA SAID THAT

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PAGE 01 TOKYO 03806 03 OF 03 150610Z

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AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PRIS
AMEMBASSY RANGOON
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
USLO PEKING

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 3 OF 3 TOKYO 3806
EXDIS

TIEN SAID THAT THE OTHER SE ASIANS SHOULD ACT LIKE BURMA.
DURING THE BALI SUMMIT THE GOB SENT A MESSAGE TO HANOI
WHICH STATED THAT BURMA WOULD NEVER JOIN ASEAN. CONTINUING,

TIEN ASKED RHETORICALLY, "HOW COULD VN EVER BE ASSOCIATED WITH AN ORGANIZATION WHICH PERMITTED FOREIGN BASES AND FOREIGN MILITARY ADVISORS TO BE STATIONED WITHIN ITS TERRITORY. FACT THAT BALI SUMMIT DID NOT EVEN ADDRESS THIS QUESTION IS CERTAIN PROOF OF THE NATURE OF THE ORGANIZATION. TIEN CONCLUDED WITH A RINGING, "WE WILL NEVER, NEVER JOIN ASEAN*"

12. QUERIED, TSUKADA SAID THAT THE ONLY REFERENCES TO THE US DURING THE TALKS WERE IN THE CONTEXT OF INDOCHINA AND SE ASIA. ALTHOUGH THESE REFERENCES WERE ALL NEGATIVE AND THERE WAS NO MENTION OF NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS WITH THE US, TSUKADA DID NOT INTERPRET THIS TO MEAN A HARDENING OF HANOI'S ATTITUDE TOWARD THE US. AMERICA WAS SIMPLY NOT RELEVANT TO MOST OF THE DISCUSSION.
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PAGE 02 TOKYO 03806 03 OF 03 150610Z

13. COMMENT: JAPAN'S QUEST FOR RELATIONS WITH HANOI STEMMED FROM DOMESTIC POLITICAL AND BUSINESS PRESSURES AND WAS PREDICATED ON THE PERCEPTION OF HANOI AS A POWERHOUSE IN INDOCHINA AND SE ASIA'S FUTURE. THIS PERCEPTION OF COURSE DERIVED FROM HANOI'S MILITARY

PROWESS AND ITS RECENT VICTORY BUT WAS ALSO BASED ON REPORTS FROM VISITS TO HANOI BY USUALLY PARTISAN DIETMEN AND BUSINESSMEN. DEPFONMIN ARITA'S VISIT TO HANOI IS THE FIRST BY A RANKING GOJ OFFICIAL AND HIS ASSESSMENT OF HANOI'S DEVELOPMENT AND STATUS IS OBVIOUSLY AT VARIANCE WITH THAT OF PREVIOUS VISITORS. AS A RESULT, JAPAN'S EXPECTATIONS IN ECONOMIC RELATIONS WITH HANOI SEEM TO HAVE NOW BEEN RATHER DRAMATICALLY REVISED DOWNWARD. DESPITE PROBABILITY THAT GOJ MAY NOW WONDER WHAT IT BOUGHT FOR 13.5 BILLION YEN, TOKYO WILL STILL PLACE IMPORTANCE IN ITS RELATIONS WITH VIETNAM BECAUSE THE EXAGGERATED IMAGE OF DRV PREVALENT IN JAPAN IS SHARED BY HANOI'S NEIGHBORS. ALSO VIETNAM PETROLEUM POTENTIAL STILL HAS SOME APPEAL.

14. ON INTERNATIONAL ISSUES, HANOI'S SENSITIVITY ABOUT RELATIONS WITH PEKING IS CLEAR AND COULD PERHAPS FIRESHADOW AN ATTEMPT TO RECONCILE DIFFERENCES. STATEMENT BY TIEN ON CONTINUING INDEPENDENCE OF LAOS AND CAMBODIA IS THE MOST EXPLICIT WE RECALL. LIKEWISE, HIS DENUNCIATION OF ASEAN AND RULING OUT OF ASSOCIATION BY VIETNAM WITH THE ORGANIZATION SEEMS CATEGORIC AND IS DISTRESSING.
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